

REMARKS

Consideration of the accompanying RCE filed above-identified patent application is respectfully requested.

Applicants have herein canceled claims 37-46 and 48-56, and have presented new claims 73 – 91 for substantive examination. The subject matter of new claims 73-91 is fully supported in applicants' specification and no new matter has been added by these claims.

New claims 73-91 are drawn to a system for diagnosing the quality of a reagent solution, and require means for determining a quality value corresponding to the quality of the reagent solution, a long run averaging filter configured to receive the quality value and produce a long run average of the quality value, a short run averaging filter configured to receive the quality value and producing a short run average of the quality value, and a comparator configured to compare a difference between the long run average of the quality value and the short run average of the quality value to a first threshold and produce a fault value if the difference crosses the first threshold.

The phrases "long run" and "short run" are intended by applicants to have their ordinary meaning, and therefore do not require a specific definition thereof in applicants' specification. In Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition, ©2001, for example, the phrase "long run" is defined as "extending over a long time," and the phrase "short run" is defined as "lasting for a short period of time, short-term." Using ordinary meanings of these phrases, a person of ordinary skill in the art would thus understand a "long run averaging filter" to be a filter that averages data over a long time period and a "short run averaging filter" to be a filter that averages data over a short

period of time. A person of ordinary skill in the art would therefore understand a "long run average of the quality value" to correspond to an average of the quality value that is averaged over a long time period and a "short run average of the quality value" to correspond to an average of the quality value that is averaged over a short time period.

None of the references of record disclose or teach processing data by comparing a difference between long run averaged data and short run averaged data. Accordingly, there is no basis for anticipation of applicants' claims by any of the references of record, nor is there any basis for combining any of the references of record to teach applicants' claimed invention. Applicants accordingly believe that claims 73 – 91 are in condition for allowance, and such action is solicited. The Examiner is cordially invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to discuss any unresolved matters.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Michael", is written over a horizontal line.

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